General Assembly

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Fifty-fifth session
Agenda items 61 and 62

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.93)*]

55/285. Revitalization of the General Assembly; improving the efficiency of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 47/233 of 17 August 1993, 48/264 of 29 July 1994 and 51/241 of 31 July 1997 and other relevant resolutions,

1. *Decides* to adopt the text contained in the annex to the present implementing resolution;

2. *Decides also* to continue its consideration of the items entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations system" and "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly" at its fifty-sixth session.

111th plenary meeting
7 September 2001

Annex

I. Purpose

1. The process of revitalizing the General Assembly and improving its efficiency focuses on the implementation of existing Assembly resolutions and decisions, in particular resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, and also taking into account other resolutions such as resolutions 47/233 of 17 August 1993 and 48/264 of 29 July 1994. Improvement of the procedures and working methods of the Assembly is only a first step towards more substantive improvements in and revitalization of the Assembly. The goal of this ongoing process is to enable the Assembly to play its role effectively as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative body of the United Nations.

II. The agenda of the General Assembly

2. The rationalization and streamlining of the agenda of the General Assembly should continue in order to enable the Assembly to focus its work on priority issues. Any change or suggestion concerning the agenda is made with the understanding that Member States may at any time propose any issue or item for the attention and consideration of the Assembly.

A. Clustering and biennialization of items

Cooperation item

3. All cooperation items shall be clustered under an item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" and individual cooperation items shall become sub-items of that item.

4. Practical measures to implement the clustering shall be taken in September 2001 by the General Assembly in conjunction with the adoption of the agenda of its fifty-sixth session.

5. The cooperation item shall be biennialized, starting at the fifty-seventh session, and shall appear in the agenda of the General Assembly thereafter at odd-numbered sessions.

6. Pursuant to the above decision, the biennialization shall be reflected in each related resolution, starting at the fifty-sixth session, as appropriate.

7. A joint debate shall be held on the cooperation item, during which all or some aspects of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations may be addressed.

8. Any resolution under individual sub-items shall remain separate.

9. The cooperation item and its sub-items shall read as follows:

"Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations:

"(*a*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity;

"(*b*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference;

"(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization;

"(*d*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States;

"(*e*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System;

"(*f*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States;

"(*g*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe;

"(*h*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community;

"(*i*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization;

"(*j*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union;

"(*k*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie;

"(*l*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization;

"(*m*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe;

"(*n*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States;

"(*o*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons;

"(*p*) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization."

B. Biennialization of items

10. The following items shall be considered by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and thereafter biennially:

(*a*) "Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic";

(*b*) "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies";

(*c*) "United Nations reform: measures and proposals";

(*d*) "The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti";

(*e*) "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields".

11. The following item shall continue to be considered biennially, at even-numbered sessions: "Elimination of coercive measures as a means of political and economic compulsion".

C. Items for consideration by a Main Committee

12. The following item shall be considered by the Third Committee, starting at the fifty-sixth session: "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly".

III. General Assembly consideration of reports

A. Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

13. The General Assembly stresses the importance of fulfilling the mandates given by it to the Secretary-General, pursuant to section II of the annex to resolution 51/241, in particular paragraphs 5, 6 and 9 thereof.

14. As regards implementation of paragraph 7 of the annex to resolution 51/241, the President of the General Assembly, after consideration by the Assembly of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, shall inform the Assembly of his assessment of the debate on the report in order for the Assembly to determine the need for further action.

B. Efforts towards more concise reports, issued and submitted on time

15. Member States need to take concrete action to implement paragraph 32 of the annex to resolution 51/241, including by requesting more integrated reports.

16. In preparing the annual memorandum concerning the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the secretariat of the Assembly, in consultation with the substantive departments of the Secretariat, should look for synergies and integration of reports.

17. Member States and entities of the United Nations system should make a serious effort to submit their replies and inputs to requests for information or views pursuant to resolutions of the General Assembly within the prescribed deadlines.

18. The Secretary-General is requested to make further suggestions as to how to speed up the preparation of reports and to rationalize the scheduling of meetings. The Secretary-General shall keep the President of the General Assembly and the General Committee informed on this issue on a regular basis throughout the sessions of the Assembly.

IV. Organization of work

19. In order to implement fully paragraph 28 of the annex to resolution 51/241, the President of the General Assembly is encouraged to make greater use of facilitators, where appropriate.

V. The General Committee

20. In order to enhance the capacity of the General Committee to assist the President of the General Assembly in the conduct of the business of the Assembly and to improve continuity between its different sessions, at the outset of each session, each Vice-President of the Assembly shall designate a liaison person for the duration of the session. This designation may be made informally, without any amendment to rule 39 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, by means of a letter to its President.

VI. Role of the President of the General Assembly

A. Consultations

21. In order to make more use of the regular consultations provided for in paragraph 43 of the annex to resolution 51/241, including between the President of the General Assembly and the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General should provide these meetings with secretarial support, as appropriate, including written information to Member States through the chairmen of the regional groups.

B. Strengthening the office of the President of the General Assembly

22. Additional measures are required to implement paragraph 44 of the annex to resolution 51/241, in particular in the area of substantive support for the President of the General Assembly. Therefore, adequate support should be made available to the office of the President in the substantive areas of its work. To this end, the Secretary-General is requested to take appropriate measures and to submit proposals to the relevant committees for their consideration during the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly.

VII. Enhancing the use of modern technology

23. There is a need to enhance the use of modern technology and information technology within the United Nations, including in the process of negotiation within the Organization.

24. Taking into account the general support in this regard, the Secretary-General is requested to submit proposals to the General Assembly for its consideration:

(*a*) Introduction of a system to read ballot papers electronically, taking due account of the security requirements in this regard;

(*b*) Wiring of the main conference rooms at Headquarters to provide members of delegations and the Secretariat with access to the Official Document System and other databases of the Organization, as well as to the Internet, together with electronic access to texts of statements and reports and, in the case of reports, simultaneous access to texts in all official languages;

(*c*) Other areas of the work of the Assembly in which the use of modern technology and information technology would contribute to enhancing efficiency in its working methods.